



## LOOKING TO BUILD OR UPGRADE UTILITY SERVICE? **Don't delay. Act today!**

**A**s spring approaches, many members begin to plan home improvement or other projects that may require new electrical services or upgrades.

Northern Plains Electric Cooperative urges members planning a project that involves electrical work to please reach out to us as early as possible. Some electrical installations and upgrades have lead times, and early planning allows us to ensure we can meet your needs in a timely manner.

Recommendations for members:

- Do not wait until the height of the spring construction season to request new services, as crews will be heavily booked.
- Reach out to our engineering department to discuss projects. They will guide you through the necessary

steps, which often include staking, permitting and prepaying for construction.

- Accurate, complete data in service requests helps expedite the engineering and approval processes. ■

### MARCH 2026

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# 5 REASONS TO RUN FOR BOARD OF DIRECTORS

## Director petitions due by April 10

**N**orthern Plains Electric Cooperative (NPEC) believes the best ideas come from the people we serve – our members. Our directors are people like you – neighbors who care about our community, our co-op and our future. Board service is a chance to make a difference in your community, guide the future of local energy and ensure your neighbors' voices are heard. Here's why stepping up matters:

1. **You'll grow as a leader.** As a board member, you'll learn a lot about energy, governance and leadership. These skills will serve you both inside and outside the boardroom.
2. **You'll have a say in your co-op's future.** As a board member, you'll guide decisions that keep our co-op strong, from investing in new technology to planning for reliable, affordable power. Board members oversee budgets, long-term planning and major projects.
3. **You'll represent your friends and neighbors.** Elected by their neighbors, our board members are co-op members first, and they bring that perspective

into every decision.

4. **You'll strengthen your community.** NPEC is deeply committed to helping the communities we serve. We donate to local causes, promote economic and community development efforts, and offer scholarships and educational opportunities for area youth. As a board member, you'll help guide those investments and strengthen your community.
5. **You'll make a difference.** The work you do on the board will have an impact long after your term ends. From the policies you help create to the projects you support, you'll leave a lasting mark on your co-op and your community.

Ready to lead? If you're passionate about our community and want to help shape NPEC's future, consider running for the board. Your voice matters, and so does your leadership. We'd be honored to have you at the boardroom table.

For more information on how to run for the board of directors, visit [nplains.com](http://nplains.com) or call 800-822-2500. ■



# SAVE THE DATE

## ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING

### JUNE 11 | MADDOCK

Maddock Community Center - 201 Central Ave

MORE INFORMATION WILL BE AVAILABLE IN THE COMING MONTHS





# YOU HAVE THE POWER TO SAVE



**F**lip a switch. Change the air filter. Unplug electronics. As a Northern Plains Electric Cooperative member, you have the power to save every day. Start by avoiding these six wintertime energy-wasting mistakes that could be costing you.

### 1. Failing to replace the furnace filter

Furnace filters should be replaced once each month during the heating season.

### 2. Neglecting your thermostat

Lowering your thermostat when you're asleep or away from home is the simplest and most cost-effective way to save on winter energy bills, but it's widely ignored. Smart thermostats make it easy. They automatically adjust temperatures to save energy and maintain comfort based on your schedule.

### 3. Ignoring cold drafts

If some rooms or areas feel colder than others, don't just crank up the thermostat or break out the space heater. Check for gaps that may be letting cold air inside. Start with windows and exterior doors. Other common culprits include exterior plumbing, wiring or exhaust vents in your basement or attic. Seal any gaps you find with weatherstripping, caulk or expandable foam insulation.

### 4. Letting warm air escape up the chimney

Your chimney is an outlet for the warm air your heating system generates. If your fireplace is not in use, keep the damper closed to prevent any warm air from going up the chimney. Check the seal on the flue damper and make sure it is as snug as possible. Consider installing tempered glass doors and a heat exchange system that blows warm air back inside.

### 5. Not letting the sun shine

On sunny days, opening shades and curtains on south-facing windows can let natural light in, which also brings welcome heat, reducing the strain on your heating system. Closing window treatments at night not only ensures privacy, but also helps keep warm air inside.

### 6. Overusing the space heater

Space heaters are great for providing short-term warmth in cold areas, such as your basement or a workroom in the garage. However, using them long-term around your home can get really costly. If there are rooms or spaces in your home where you need extra heat, check for and seal exterior gaps and contact a qualified contractor to ensure your home is properly insulated. ■

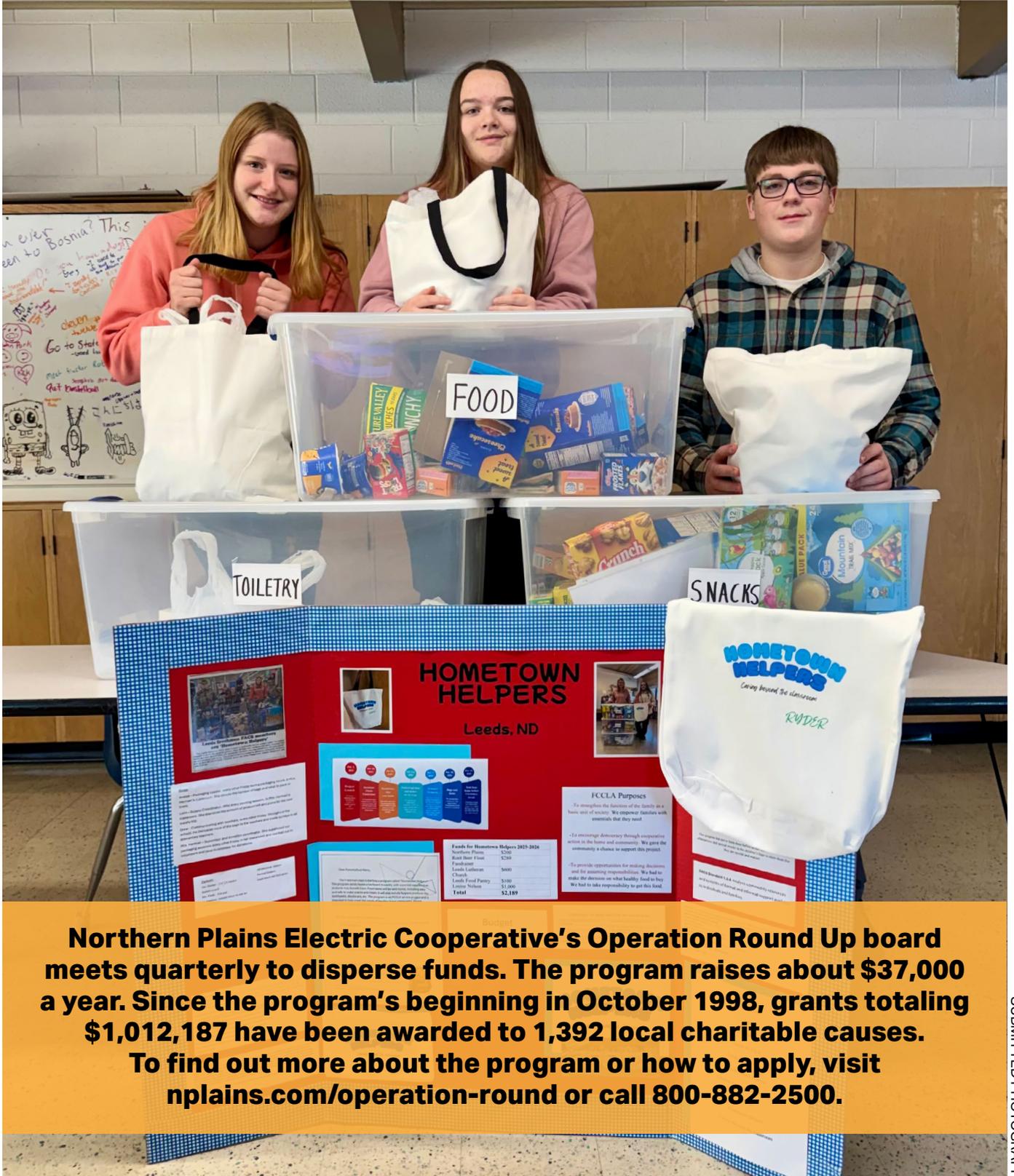
## Beat the winter peak

Did you know electricity costs more during peak hours of usage?

When it comes to electric demand, electric utilities and grid operators watch two variables closely: winter peaks and summer peaks. These are the times of the year when electric demand is highest – and electricity is most expensive.

That's why we encourage members to use less electricity during peak demand hours. Usage peaks often occur in the morning when people awake and again in the evening when people return home.

If you can lower your use of electricity during these peak hours, you can help your electric cooperative keep rates stable.



**Northern Plains Electric Cooperative's Operation Round Up board meets quarterly to disperse funds. The program raises about \$37,000 a year. Since the program's beginning in October 1998, grants totaling \$1,012,187 have been awarded to 1,392 local charitable causes. To find out more about the program or how to apply, visit [nplains.com/operation-round](http://nplains.com/operation-round) or call 800-882-2500.**

*The Hometown Helpers project doubles as a STAR Event presented at a Family, Career and Community Leaders of America district competition in February.*

SUBMITTED PHOTOGRAPH

# HOMETOWN HELPERS

## Caring beyond the classroom

BY BRITTNEE WILSON

Sometimes, the biggest ideas come from the smallest of classrooms. At Leeds Public School, just three freshmen in the Family and Consumer Science (FACS) class turned a notion into action, and got their community involved to help those in need.

In FACS class, students learn about nutrition, culinary arts, financial literacy and child development to prepare for independent living and careers. The course encourages hands-on development.

Their teacher, Nicole Herman, said their latest project is helping ensure elementary students have nutritious meals during the weekends, which was an idea inspired by their local cooperative.

Earlier, the school received a letter from Northern Plains Electric Cooperative (NPEC) asking whether the school participated in a weekend backpack food program. The inquiry was part of NPEC's Operation Round Up program, in which members choose to round up their monthly utility bill to the nearest dollar. Those spare cents are placed into a fund to support nonprofit organizations and individuals in need across NPEC's 11-county service territory. Yearly, the program allocates dollars to local food banks and backpack programs in need.

While the school did not currently have such a program, the letter struck a chord as it landed on Herman's desk. Knowing there was a need, Herman brought the letter to her freshman class, wondering if they'd be interested in starting their own program.

She was answered by three enthusiastic yeses, and they named the project "Hometown Helpers."

The students immediately took ownership of every step of the process. Their first funding came through a donation from NPEC's Operation Round Up. From there, they requested financial assistance from a couple local organizations, followed by a root beer float fundraiser to get the ball rolling. Word spread quickly in the small community of Leeds, with a population of 450, as residents reached out to see how they could donate to the worthy cause. Before they knew it, the project was fully funded for the calendar school year.

But the work didn't stop with fundraising. The students tackled the project from start to finish. They began by surveying the elementary teachers to help identify students who might benefit from the program. Parents then received permission slips along with a request for any dietary needs. Out of the 84 elementary students, 13 students are now receiving packed meals every other weekend.

The logistics were no small feat for the three freshmen. They identified the need, obtained permission, created

a budget, developed a shopping list, purchased the food and packed each bag for distribution. Thoughtful planning guided their shopping list, as each item needed to be easy for kids to prepare independently, with most of the items high in protein and free from "empty calories."

"One of the coolest things they've done, which was completely their idea, is they write out a positive affirmation and place it in every bag to help build confidence," Herman said.

Just like their class size, that piece of paper may be small, but the message is huge. It's not just about filling backpacks with food, it's reminding kids they matter and they are supported, not only by these few freshmen, but by the community.

"The type of community we live in is such a privilege," said freshman Leila Follman. "Whenever there is someone in need, everyone steps up and does their part."

Hometown Helpers is an inspiration that the combination of youth leadership and community pride can make a powerful impact no matter the class size or town population. ■



SUBMITTED PHOTOGRAPH

*The Leeds FACS freshmen class shopped to purchase easily prepared food items to send home with elementary students who many benefit from the extra groceries. Left to right are **Drew Haagenson, Anslee Haagenson and Leila Follman.***



Cooperative employees accept the Safety Performance Award presented to Northern Plains Electric Cooperative. Left to right are **Laine Hoyt, Jonathan Tandeski, Denby Lueck, Justin Kollman, Dustin Peterson** and **Tom Zink**.

## NPEC earns safety achievement award

**F**ourteen North Dakota electric cooperatives, including Northern Plains Electric Cooperative (NPEC), were recognized for outstanding safety by the North Dakota Association of Rural Electric Cooperatives (NDAREC). NPEC was presented with the Safety Performance Award at a Jan. 15 awards ceremony hosted by NDAREC in Mandan. The award recognized the

cooperative's achievement for zero recordable injuries in 2025.

"NPEC takes pride in fostering a culture where every employee takes responsibility for themselves and others. It requires continuous practice and effort to make sure everyone goes home safe to their families at the end of the day," says Operations Manager Justin Kollman. ■

## Employee news

**J**anuary brought a couple new faces and changes to Northern Plains Electric Cooperative's (NPEC) workforce.

NPEC welcomed Coty Remmick as our dispatcher and safety coordinator. Remmick lives in Carrington and is originally from Jamestown. He has over 21 years of underground utility locating and crew management experience, making him familiar with our service area.

"I'm ready to be a team player and help out in any way I can," Remmick says. In his spare time, he enjoys family time, fishing, hunting and the outdoors.

The IT department welcomed Marcus Hewitt of Carrington as our meter and load control technician. Hewitt comes to NPEC with a wealth of experience in the utility industry, with over nine years of hands-on experience as a journeyman electrician in high-volume industrial environments.

Hewitt said he is excited to learn the distribution side of the industry and grow in his career. In his spare time, he enjoys spending time with family, hunting, fishing and camping.



**Coty Remmick**



**Marcus Hewitt**



**Laine Hoyt**

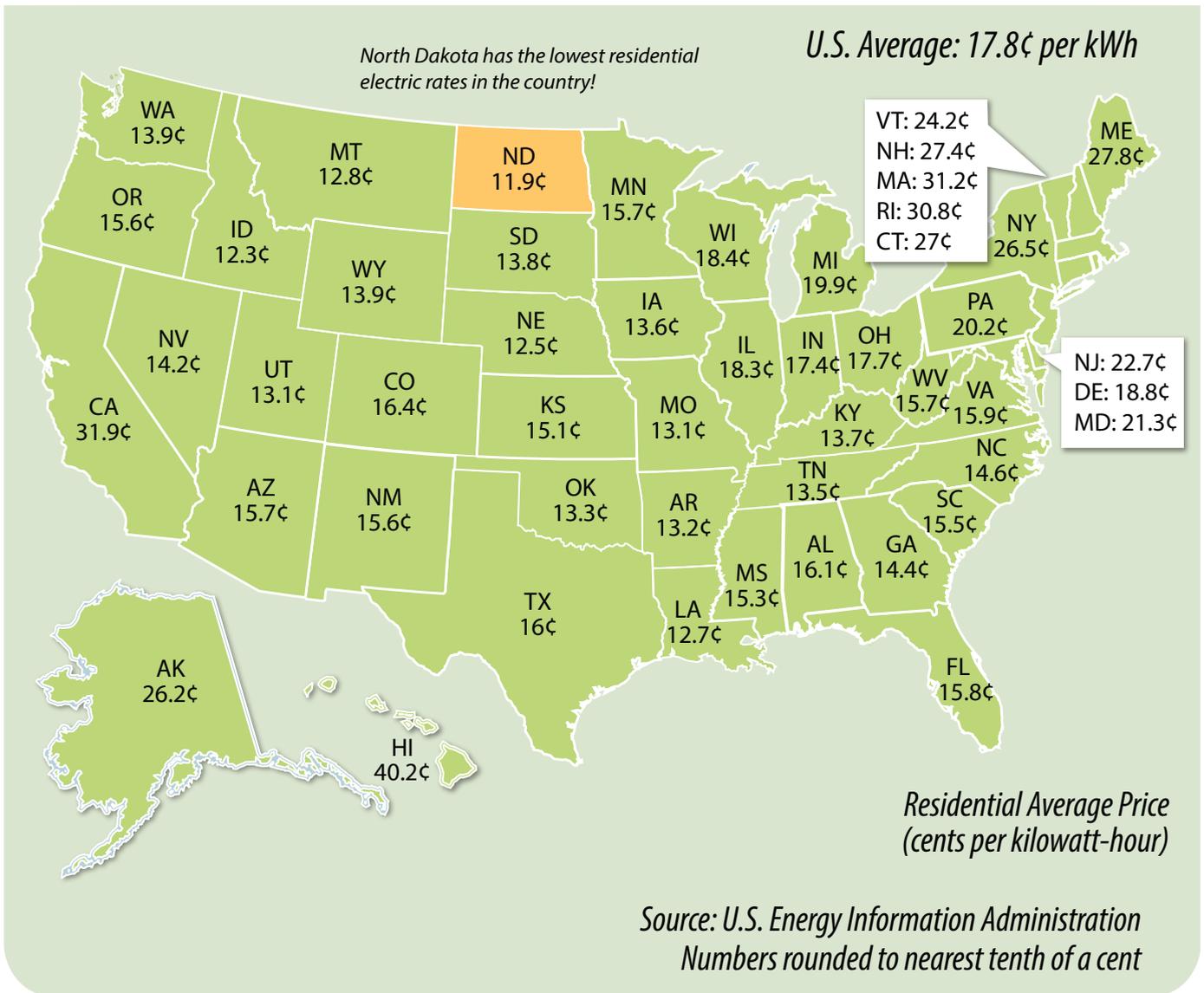
NPEC journeyman lineworker Laine Hoyt has been named the Carrington East foreman. A McHenry native, Hoyt has worked for NPEC since 2021 with the Carrington East line crew. Hoyt says he enjoys working for his hometown community.

"I am confident that Laine will thrive in his new role and continue to contribute to the cooperative's success," says Operations Manager Justin Kollman.

Congratulations to Coty, Marcus and Laine. ■

# Average Prices for Residential Electricity

November 2025 figures, in cents per kWh



## ELECTRIC RATES:

### How does North Dakota compare?

**A**cross the United States, thousands of people work every minute of every day to keep the power flowing 24/7/365. From the coal miner to the lineworker and everyone in-between, it takes an immense amount of people, resources, coordination and planning to ensure you can charge your cellphone, heat your home, dry your grain or turn on your lights.

The cost of that electricity is determined by several factors, from the price of poles and wires to the expense of generating and delivering power.

In North Dakota, electric cooperative rate making is a function of local electric co-op boards of directors, which are democratically elected from the membership by

the co-op members. Electric co-op boards weigh many factors when determining rates and balancing reliability, safety and affordability.

When an electric cooperative board of directors votes to increase rates, directors are also raising their own electric rates, because they, too, are members of the cooperative. This is one of the hallmark advantages of the cooperative model.

And, those democratically elected directors have done a good job, if you consider the price of retail electricity. North Dakotans enjoy the lowest electricity rates in the country, averaging 11.9 cents per kilowatt-hour! ■

# Last call for poster contest



Attention kids! Grab your art supplies! Northern Plains Electric Cooperative is sponsoring a safety poster contest for children in kindergarten to sixth grade.

The purpose of the safety poster contest is to help make children aware of the dangers of electricity. At NPEC, safety always comes first and we are dedicated to doing our part to teach children how to be safe around electricity. Winners will be announced on our Facebook page and featured in the NPEC local pages of *North Dakota Living*.

## RULES

- Posters must be on white, 8.5x11-inch paper.
- Posters must depict the theme, "How to stay safe around electricity."
- Print the child's name, grade, address and parents' names on the back of the poster.

- Open to dependents of NPEC members.
- **Deadline is March 18.**

## ENTRY CATEGORIES

- Kindergarten to first grade
- Second to third grade
- Fourth, fifth and sixth grade

## PRIZES IN EACH CATEGORY

- First: \$20
- Second: \$15
- Third: \$10

**Submit entries to an NPEC office (Cando or Carrington) or mail to:**

Northern Plains  
Electric Cooperative  
Attn: Poster Contest  
P.O. Box 608  
Cando, ND 58324



Your Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 

*An equal opportunity provider and employer.*

**CANDO OFFICE:**  
609 4th Ave.  
Cando, ND 58324

**CARRINGTON OFFICE:**  
1515 West Main  
Carrington, ND 58421

**OFFICE HOURS:**  
Monday-Friday  
8 a.m. to 4 p.m.

www.nplains.com  
justask@nplains.com  
800-882-2500

## BOARD & MANAGEMENT:

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Vice president.....	Curtis Wiesz, Heaton
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